

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-47 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9, 10, 15, 19, 24, 28, 31 and 33 are amended, and claims 39-47 are added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings.

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the personal interview conducted December 6, 2006. The arguments and amendments set forth herein reflect the discussions during the personal interview, including any agreements reached. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Informalities

The Office Action objects to claim 33 due to an informality. It is respectfully submitted that the amendment to claim 33 is responsive to the Examiner's comments, and thus the objection should be withdrawn.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 24 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

More specifically, the Office Action asserts that the recitation of the shaft extending continuously in a longitudinal direction of the filter case is unclear, and that the specification does provide a meaning for continuously, thus rendering claims 24 and 31 indefinite. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Webster's Online Dictionary defines continuous as "marked by

uninterrupted extension in space, time or sequence.” The Examiner’s attention is drawn to paragraphs 58-59 and Figures 4-5 of the present application, which clearly set forth that the shaft 52 extends continuously in a longitudinal direction of the filter case 30 from the cap 51 to the plate 53, without interruption. Applicant maintains that claims 24 and 31, and particularly the use of the word continuously in this context, would be well understood, especially when taken in light of the drawings and specification by one of ordinary skill in the art. However, merely to expedite prosecution of the application, Applicant has amended claims 24 and 31 in response to the Examiner’s comments. It is respectfully submitted that claims 24 and 31 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 5-15, 18-35 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,167,733 to Lee. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a filter assembly for a washing machine, comprising, *inter alia*, a filter provided in the filter case, the filter comprising a rod with a solid walled plate disposed at one end thereof and in opposition to the passage so as to prevent a particle from passing through the passage.

Independent claim 15 is directed to a filter assembly for a washing machine, including a filter case comprising, *inter alia*, a partition wall provided in the tube and configured to partition an internal space of the tube into a first chamber in communication with the inlet, and a second chamber in communication with the outlet. The filter assembly also includes a filter, comprising,

inter alia, a rod extending from the cap toward the opening, and a plate provided at an end of the rod and positioned facing the opening in the partition wall with a predetermined gap formed between the plate and the partition wall.

Independent claim 33 is directed to a filter assembly for a washing machine, comprising, *inter alia*, a filter provided in the filter case, the filter comprising a solid walled plate disposed in opposition to the passage so as to prevent a particle from passing through the passage.

As discussed during the personal interview, Lee neither discloses nor suggests at least such features, or the respective claimed combinations of features.

More specifically, as discussed during the personal interview, Lee discloses a pump 350 that includes a rectangular housing 351 which defines a single chamber in which a filter 340 is installed. The filter includes a flat mesh plate 346 which extends from a cap 344, the flat mesh plate 346 including a plurality of holes 346a. Used wash water flows through a first port 348 and directly impinges on the plate 346, where it is filtered prior to being either re-circulated through a second port 354 or drained through a third port 356, depending on a position of a pair of valves 355 and 357 and a rotation direction of an impeller 358.

As discussed during the personal interview, the mesh plate 346 is the edge of the mesh plate 346 which is connected to the cap 344. Lee neither discloses nor suggests that the portion of the mesh plate 346 shown in cross section in Figure 4 of Lee is a rod which extends between the cap and the mesh plate 346, as is the rod recited in independent claims 1 and 15. Further, as discussed during the personal interview, Lee clearly discloses that the flat mesh plate 346

(compared in the Office Action to the recited plate) includes a plurality of openings 346a through which the used wash water flows. Thus, Lee neither discloses that the mesh plate 346 is solid walled, as is the plate recited in independent claims 1 and 33. Additionally, as discussed during the personal interview, Lee discloses a single chamber formed within the case 351, and not first and second chambers defined by a partition wall, with a passage formed therebetween, as recited in independent claim 15.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 15 and 33 are not anticipated by Lee, and thus the rejection of independent claims 1, 15 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Lee should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 5-14, 18-32, 34, 35 and 37 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1, 15 and 33, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

IV. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 2-4, 16, 17 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lee. As indicated by the Examiner during the personal interview, it was also the Examiner's intention to reject claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lee. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 2-4, 16, 17, 36 and 38 are allowable over Lee at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1, 15 and 33, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features. Further, it would not have been obvious to modify the integrated filter disclosed by Lee to incorporate the features recited in claims 2-4, 16, 17, 36 and 38. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4, 16, 17, 36 and 38 are allowable

over Lee, and thus the rejection of claims 2-4, 16, 17, 36 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lee should be withdrawn.

V. New Claims 39-47

New claims 39-47 are added to the application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 39-47 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, and are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1, 15 and 33, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, JOANNA K. MASON, at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. **10/717,668**

Docket No. **K-0558**

Reply to Office Action dated July 12, 2006

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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